

PROTECTION OF LAWFUL
COMMERCE IN ARMS ACT

Mr. REED. Mr. President, before I make some comments about the national situation, I express my thanks to Senator CRAIG of Idaho who is the manager on the Republican side of the bill that we considered today. I had the occasion to manage the bill for the Democratic side, and his fairness and his gentlemanlike conduct was deeply appreciated.

I also recognize two of my staff members, Neil Campbell and Steve Eichenauer, who did a superb job. Thank you very much for this opportunity to mention my respect for Senator CRAIG and also my appreciation for my staff.

IRAQ INTELLIGENCE

Mr. REED. Mr. President, Seamus Heaney, the Irish poet and Nobel laureate, wrote lines that are destined for immortality:

History says, Don't hope on this side of the grave. But then, once in a lifetime the longed for tidal wave of justice can rise up, and hope and history rhyme.

We all long for that day when hope and history rhyme. But it is the special province of statecraft to try to make that rhyme.

As such, one way to look at foreign policy is to determine if our policies do rhyme with history or whether they represent the triumph of hope over history. By history, I do not mean the strictly academic variety. I mean the accumulation of insight and experience that we all carry about. Perhaps it is better described as our rough sense of the way the world works.

It is particularly interesting to pose these questions in light of the Bush foreign policy since so much of it seems to spring from ideological hope, from robust attempts to reshape the world along predetermined lines.

Iraq, of course, is the crucial arena. It has been made so by the administration.

Our immediate response to September 11 was to seek out and destroy the terrorist apparatus that struck us. Our attack in Afghanistan was aimed at the heart of al-Qaida and the rogue regime that provided it sanctuary. We understood very painfully that we could not grant these terrorists safe harbor. We had to act and we had to be prepared to act preemptively to destroy al-Qaida. The threat was clear and in the context of international terrorists like al-Qaida, the doctrine of preemption was not only compelling but also inescapable.

Operation Enduring Freedom, the demolition of the Taliban regime, and the disruption of the al-Qaida infrastructure represented a shrewd use of military power to focus directly on an existential threat. The history, again, using my very nontechnical definition, clearly shows that al-Qaida could not be deterred and toleration would simply invite further attack.

Ironically, having begun the destruction of al-Qaida in Afghanistan, the administration quickly shifted its attention from the complete destruction of the al-Qaida network to Iraq. Only in the past few weeks has the Bush administration begun to realize that Afghanistan is far from secure. They are redoubling their military and political efforts to ensure that Afghanistan does not slide back into a failed state. Still, the President's recent budget request only provides about \$1 billion in funding for that effort, whereas commanders in the field have said they will annually need \$5 billion to ensure success.

Furthermore, regardless of the situation in Afghanistan, and indeed anywhere else, the Bush administration has never lost its preoccupation with Saddam Hussein and his Baathist regime.

Some may recall that in January of 1998, Secretary Rumsfeld, Secretary Wolfowitz, and other prominent neoconservatives wrote to President Clinton urging him to use military force to remove Saddam Hussein. In their words:

The only acceptable strategy is one that eliminates the possibility that Iraq would be able to use weapons of mass destruction. In the near term, this means a willingness to undertake military action as diplomacy is clearly failing. In the long term, it means removing Saddam Hussein and his regime from power. That now needs to become the aim of American foreign policy.

This letter predated the attack on Iraq by 5 years. It predated September 11 by more than 3 years.

With the publication of the first glimpses inside the Bush administration, this preoccupation with Iraq becomes more obvious. Former Secretary of the Treasury Paul O'Neill recounts that at the first meeting of the National Security Council on January 30, 2001, the discussion quickly vaulted over nagging issues of the conflict between Israel and the Palestinian Authority and landed squarely on Iraq. In an apparently scripted exchange, Condoleezza Rice and Vice President CHENEY and George Tenet not only led the discussion but also concluded with an examination of grainy photos purporting to show what the CIA thought was a plant producing chemical or biological materials for weapons manufacture. According to O'Neill, "ten days in, and it was about Iraq."

September 11 did not put Iraq in the administration's gunsights. It was always there. It was there as a challenge, a personal one for the President, and in the view of neoconservatives, it was there as an opportunity to make hope and history rhyme.

But in focusing almost exclusively on Iraq, the administration, in my view, disregarded a great deal of history. Again, I use the term history colloquially. The justification for action was based more on assumptions than evidence. The planning for their actions was based more on hopes than experience. The end of the cold war and

the demise of the Soviet Union unshackled our military power so that we are unbeatable in any conventional battle against any conventional foe.

However, it has not reversed a century in which empires collapsed and foreign colonies began a troubled but independent road. Our military power may be unchecked by any military adversary, but it is exercised in a world that has come to distrust the unilateral use of force and disbelief of the motives of those who wield such force.

The administration's insistence on an essentially unilateral approach to confronting Iraq not only increased our effort both militarily and economically, but it also defied the worldwide consensus that without an immediate threat, the unilateral action of a great power against a lesser state is a vanished aspect of the colonial epic.

Today, the United States is fervently trying to maintain the mantle of liberator and avoid the label of occupier. In large part, this is due to the overwhelming presence of the United States unleavened by a broad array of allies or the significant presence of the United States or United Nations or NATO in Iraq.

In contrast, multinational operations in places such as the Balkans managed to avoid the stigma of occupation and insurgency for almost a decade. A multilateral attack is not a talisman that will guarantee success, but it is more congruent with a world that has rejected the colonial solution in favor of multinational action.

The administration's rationale for a preemptive and virtually unilateral operation against Iraq rested on a faithful devotion to their preconceived notions and a strained reading of available intelligence. One of the more thoughtful and evenhanded military analysts, Anthony Cordesman, at the Center for Strategic and International Studies has accurately summarized the record of the administration's intelligence activities leading up to Operation Iraqi Freedom.

In his words:

[T]here are many indications that the U.S. intelligence community came under pressure to accept reporting by Iraqi opposition forces with limited credibility, and in some cases, a history of actively lying to either exaggerate their own importance or push the U.S. towards a war to overthrow Saddam Hussein. In what bore a striking resemblance to similar worst case interpretations of the global threat from the proliferation of ballistic missiles under the Rumsfeld Commission, U.S. policymakers not only seem to have pushed for the interpretation that would best justify military action, but to have focused on this case as if it were a reality, rather than a possibility.

In the U.S., this pressure seems to have come primarily from the Office of the Vice President and the Office of the Secretary of Defense, but it seems clear that the Bush administration as a whole sought intelligence that would support its case in going to war, and this had a significant impact on the intelligence community from 2002-onwards.

The administration did not use intelligence to help make a difficult decision. It used intelligence to sell a preconceived notion. The long-term fixed